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ABSTRACT

The first in a series, this paper deals with housing offered employable single men in Sacramento, California during the winter of 1969-70. Sponsored by the Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences (University of California, Davis), the study was begun in February 1970. The initial impetus for university involvement in the problems of single, displaced agricultural workers resulted from contacts between the university and the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group, Inc. (SSSC), an organization representing a segment of the seasonal farm labor force. Research was conducted at a housing project operated by the Sacramento City-County Housing Authority from October 1, 1969 through April 15, 1970. Information was gathered by the in-culture research method, which operates on the philosophy that persons who participate in a culture or subculture are a valuable information source on their needs and lifestyles. Case studies, interviews, and a questionnaire were used. This report discusses the three types of men living at the center (farmworkers, hustlers, and misfits); their attitudes about themselves and the living facility; and the history of some problems encountered at the project. Some of the findings indicated that the center became an institution with the same problems encountered in jails and prisons; and that the men needed meaningful roles in the development, operation, and maintenance of the housing facility. A glossary of terms and statistical data on the 774 men housed at the center are given in the two appendixes. (NQ)

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HOUSING SACRAMENTO'S INVISIBLE MAN

Farm Workers, Hustlers, and Misfits

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Department of
Applied Behavioral Sciences
University of California, Davis Campus

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HOUSING SACRAMENTO'S INVISIBLE MEN

Farm Workers, Hustlers, and Misfits

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August 1970

Based on data collected from In-Culture Research Project with the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group funded by the University of California Agricultural Experiment Station.

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We are especially grateful to Mr. Abel Chacon, President of the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group Inc., whose efforts and encouragement during the formative stages of this project were quite helpful to the research team.

We also wish to express our appreciation for the help and guidance of Dr. Magorah Maruyama, Professor of Sociology at California State College, Hayward, whose extensive work with this research approach made this project possible.

Last but not least a special thanks to the men of SSSG Inc. for their time and patience in supplying the Team with a great deal of personal information.

PREFACE

The initial impetus for the University involvement in the problems of single, displaced agricultural workers came as a result of contacts with the University by Mr. Abel Chacon, President, and Mr. Theaddy Jenkins, Vice-President of the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group, Inc. (SSSG). This organization is representative of a segment of the seasonal farm labor force. These men are being hit first and most severely by the mechanization of agriculture and at the same time are being left homeless by the redevelopment activity in the larger population centers up and down the valley. SSSG has been in existence four years and became incorporated February 23, 1968.

Mr. Chacon felt that the University could be of assistance in the development of alternatives to the situations which the men he represents are now facing; no jobs and no housing. These were the feelings expressed by Mr. Chacon at a meeting with Dr. James H. Meyer, then Dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, on May 2, 1969. Recognizing the responsibility of the college in this area of needed research, the Dean appointed a committee to work with Mr. Chacon and his organization. The committee is chaired by Dr. James W. Becket of the Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences, U.C.D. and includes: Jon Elam, U.C. Extension; Harry O. Walker, Assistant Dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences; John W. Mamer, Chancellor's Office, Coordinator of Public Programs; Robert J. Coffelt, Agricultural Engineer; William A. Harvey, Botany Extension; Kellis E. Parker, U.C.D. Law School; Doyle A. Reed, U.C. Agricultural Extension Economist, and Glenn R. Hawkes, Associate Dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, ex officio committee member.

The information presented here is the result of a project developed by this committee in cooperation with the leadership of the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group, Inc.

Introduction

The In-Culture Research Project

This paper presents results of research conducted at a housing project for employable single men at 2700 Front Street, Sacramento, California. The center was operated by the Sacramento City-County Housing Authority from October 1, 1969 through April 15, 1970.

The study, involving "In-Culture Research," began in February, 1970, sponsored by the Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences, University of California, Davis Campus. It was coordinated by Bill Durant (Assistant Specialist, Department of Applied Behavioral Sciences) under consultation with Dr. Magorah Maruyama (Professor of Sociology at California State College, Hayward), originator of this research approach.

This paper, the first in a series, deals with the housing offered employable single men in the winter of 1969-70. The information was gathered by the In-Culture Research Team. Future papers will deal with areas such as employment, job training, life styles assumed by single farm workers, and their relations with police and the courts.

In-Culture Research operates on the philosophy that the persons who participate in a culture or sub-culture are a valuable source of information that is important and relevant to their needs and life styles. Such persons have both the ability and the need to translate that information into terms understood by the dominant society.

Because there is little valid information which identifies the men, their needs, and life styles, we felt this information could be gathered best by themselves. They know what is relevant to them, and therefore know what questions to ask. Also, through their own organization (Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group Inc.) the men have expressed a need and desire to tell society who they are, what they need, and how "mainstream" society can help them achieve their goals. Other methods of research would be unacceptable to them for numerous reasons; the men viewed this project as another means of helping themselves. This project is intended to provide the Single Men's group with data to use when they become involved in program planning with agencies and institutions such as the Housing Authority, the University, and other decision-making bodies. One of the most valuable resources any "grass roots" organization has is the information they can gain through their constituents. The In-Culture Research approach could be developed into an effective tool not only for this particular group but also for similar organizations.

The project functioned in the following manner:

1. A team of In-Culture Researchers (IR's) was composed of men who were living at the housing facility. At the outset all the men were told of the project at a regular "Bull Session;" all were invited to attend a Saturday meeting. At the first two meetings the group size ranged from 15 to 25 men. Maruyama and Durant made it clear that the team would be selected by the group itself. Anyone could drop out of the project at any time. The men were also told they would be paid for all the work they completed. This core group remained fairly stable throughout the project, although other men dropped in and out freely. (Since this core group did the bulk of the work, only they were paid.)

2. Direction of the project was controlled by the Team. They met with Maruyama every Saturday through the last week in March. During these Team meetings the men discussed the problems they were having in defining areas of concern, information gathering, writing up interviews, and analyzing information. These meetings were also used to deal with any crises within the Team, such as personality conflicts.

3. Durant provided the Team with such things as tape recorders, tapes, writing materials, and other resources. He also met with the Team every Wednesday morning or whenever they felt a crisis required immediate action.

4. The Team members went through an "exploration" period of approximately one month. During this time they developed sample questionnaires and conducted exploratory interviews. Toward the end of this period, they seemed to feel more comfortable as a Team and more confident and willing to handle crises which occurred within their group.

5. During March and the first part of April the men were engaged in collecting information. Some of them used an eleven-page questionnaire that they had developed to cover the following topics: Single Men's Organization, Housing, Food Vouchers, Restaurants, Social Workers, pay for the County Work Bus, Police and Courts, Voting, Marriage, Work Bus conditions, Farm Work, Job Training, and the Future. Other Team members preferred to conduct what they called "case studies" and "incident studies." These usually took much longer than the questionnaire, with some interviews lasting several days. The men interviewed were selected at random; all of them lived at the center and were paid $1.50 for their time.

Some members of the paid staff were also interviewed.

6. One of the Team members stayed on after the interviews to write the report on housing. He was assisted by Durant and other University staff members. He also "got a hand from other members of the Team whenever they came through town." Members of the Research Team are sincerely thanked for providing a new perspective on the problems of single farm workers and other single employable men.

This report includes two appendixes. Appendix A is a glossary of terms used in the body of the paper; Appendix B includes statistical information on 774 men housed at the center during the winter of 1969-70.

This paper was written by Silas N. Ragster with the help of Charles Anderson, Tony Cota, Willie Little, Willie Lasby, Manuel Fernandez, and Jerry Costa. All these men live at the 2700 Front Street center. Bill Durant helped edit the manuscript.

The language used in the quoted material is not intended to offend the reader. The Research Team felt it was necessary to include it because of the feelings and attitudes it portrays.

PART I

Tramps, Hustlers, and Misfits

The In-Culture Research Team wants the public to read this report on the housing for single men; they want the people to know how those living at 2700 Front Street felt about the living facilities. The Team spent much time talking about this subject, because it was a very important issue, especially toward the end of the program, when the City and County were planning to close the facility. Two members of the Team became involved in the research project in order to gather information which might be helpful in making the center a better place to live and open on a year-round basis. The men, especially the Farm Workers, talked a lot among themselves about the housing and how it was being run. As March 31, 1970 came closer, the men talked of the possibility of the center becoming a "day-haul" pick-up point where a man could work the "day-haul" buses and pay his own way. This type of thing is really needed now since all cheap housing is gone, torn down by redevelopment.

Before discussing some of the problems discovered concerning this year's housing, something must be said about the men who lived at the center. The Team identified three types of men living there: 1) Farm Workers (Tramps); 2) Hustlers; and 3) Misfits.

I. Farm Workers

This group represents 72% of the men; it comprises a sub-culture all its own. Farm Workers are a very closed kind of sub-culture and do not like bureaucracy and bureaucratic red tape, especially welfare. They pride themselves on their honesty and hard work. The Farm Workers are generally older than most of the men in the other two groups and have a loyalty toward the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group, Inc. The following incident occurred during the grounds-keeper training school at the Sacramento Skill Center conducted by the Sacramento City Unified School District:

> "Mr. Pratt made an announcement about Christmas dinner at the 'Sally" (Salvation Army). He said we all had to give our name and Social Security number and then we would get a card to eat on. Nobody said anything. They just got in line and did what they were told to do. Not one of them guys were going to sit through that 'ear banging' so none of us showed up at the 'Sally' for that dinner. None of us knew whether Chacon (President of the SSSG) was going to put on a dinner, but that's where we were going to eat. Well, we missed that Christmas dinner but God damn did

we have a party and dinner on New Years. We had wine, home made beer, and everything. When Chacon does it you can feel right at home, you know what I mean, you can be yourself."

This quote points up a feeling typical of the Farm Workers. SSSG is aware of their sub-culture and deals with the men on terms they are willing to accept. That is, the organization starts where the men are and not necessarily where the leaders would like them to be.

SSSG seems to have taken the place of their former community, "Skid Row." Most Farm Workers have been with the organization for three or four years, and have been willing to give money to it even when they could not afford to. "SSSG ain't no mission."

They came to the housing center as veterans of the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group's housing on 2nd Street (1967-68), which most considered a good experience. The reasons for this are given later in this paper.

The Farm Workers are independent and will not ask for anything if they feel the person giving it considers them charity cases. For example, one man in this group commented that he used his "work bus" money ($2.10 a week) to leave tips for the waitress in the restaurant where he ate.

They share any of the material things they might have with other Farm Workers, with no questions asked; but they share very little of themselves, their feelings, and thoughts, especially with anyone they consider an outsider. They live by a code which says "don't get involved with anybody (even another Farm Worker) if you can avoid it." They seem to feel if they get into "mainstream" society, they will be forced into unwanted involvement. The Team discovered that most of these men had known each other for many years; they had lived in labor camps together, "jungled out" together, rode "dirty face" together, and shared a "frisco circle" now and then together. However, they did not know each other's names, or, if they did, it was usually a nickname or only a first name.

They are proud of farm work because they consider it useful and skilled work. The following comment is from a tape recording made in a group interview. The men were asked whether they would go into farm work if they could start over again. The response was neither yes nor no, but rather, "Where would the man in the city be without the farm worker?" Following is an example of how they feel about their work and their skill. This incident was caused because one man doubted another man's ability as an irrigator.

I. C. R. Case Study

When this man (call him "subject A") came to camp, he seemed to be very bitter; didn't talk much; just lay on his bunk. "A" was very helpful when it was time to clean the barracks. He would do his part of the work and go back to his bunk. He ventured to talk to one guy whom he found to be from Texas, the same as he. So they had a drink together and began to talk of their home state.

They were both Farm Workers. So they talked a lot about farm work and Farm Tramps. (Tramp: a Farm Worker.) When the conversation ended, another man ("subject B") came over to "A's" new friend and continued to talk about farm work. "B" seems to have overheard some of the things "A" said to his friend and took exception to them.

"A" is a farm irrigator. He's the man who waters the plant crops in the field by channeling water to wherever it is needed while it is being pumped from the river or canal. "B" has done the same kind of work.

"B" doesn't believe "A" is an irrigator.

What Happened	Interviewer's Feelings
"B" says to "A's" friend: "I don't think that '--- of a -----' is an irrigator." "A's" friend doesn't say anything.	I began to feel that "B" was a bit jealous of the new irrigator.
"B" starts to talk more and louder about the trade. No one seems to pay any attention to "B."	He seems to wish that someone would listen.
"A" now raises up from his bunk and says to his new friend: "I've been irrigating for 10 to 15 years. What the ---- is that guy talking about?"	"B" gets up and starts to pace the floor, and soon goes back to his bunk and lies down.
"A" comes over to his friend's bunk and says, "I've seen a man run water up hill, believe it or not. I've been around many good irrigators."	"A" gets off his bunk quickly while gazing in "B's" direction and kneels by his friend's bunk.
"A" then goes back and gets on his bunk again.	"B" starts to twist and turn on his bunk with laughter while looking down at "A."

"B" jumps off his bunk and rushes down to "A's" friend's bunk and says, "You hear that ------- lie! Ain't no ---- ------ can run water uphill."

"A" jumps quickly off his bunk, and kneels on the floor to diagram how it could be done.

"A" starts to draw lines on the floor while "B" looks on — but mostly off. "A" says, "I can see you don't want to see how it's done. You don't want to know ----. You just want to loudmouth."

"A" says, "I saw that Mexican with my own eyes trickle that water up hill, about 25 feet to the end of the row. I said it couldn't be done, but he damn sure did it. I don't like being called a ------- liar."

"A" says, "You don't know who you are calling a liar. I'll cut your ------- throat man."

"A" chases "B." "B" picks up speed and beats it to the office area. "A" turns back.

"A" says, "I'll kill that Mother ------. He don't know nothing about irrigating."

I really became curious myself to hear about water running up hill, but didn't want "B" to call "A" a liar because this dude was serious.

"A" looks up at "B" while they both crouch on the floor for "A's" demonstration.

I notice "B" will not listen to "A's" demonstration or his drawing on the floor. I notice "B" seems to be ignoring anything that "A" tries to say. Gesturing to the other guys that "A" is a nut.

"B" jumps up again and loudly says, "You hear that lie. Who can believe that ----?"

I can see "A" getting angry. "A" jumps up and looks toward "B." "A" dips quickly into his pocket.

"A" takes his hand out of his pocket nervously, then extends it toward "B."

"B" looks big-eyed toward "A" and sees some type of knife.

"B" discovers that the knife in "A's" hand is in the open position, and takes off running around the corner of the lockers.

I was glad "A" chased "B" because I felt he should have let "." explain how it could be done. ("A" finally did explain it to me and his new friend.)

Few things make a Farm Tramp angry or excited enough to go as far as "A" went in this confrontation. When two Farm Tramps have an argument which gets heated enough to develop into a fight, it rarely goes past the pushing stage and lasts only a short time. The Research Team found this is not the case when a Farm Worker's ability to do the job he has done all his life is questioned. There are few things in the Farm Worker's world which he can use to measure his worth as a man. His work and ability to do it well are a primary means of evaluating self-worth. A man's acceptance into the "brotherhood" often depends on his ability to "talk shop" with some degree of competence.

To gain access to the sub-culture of the single Farm Worker one must "pay his dues;" he must know how to survive in the Tramp's environment. Following is an In-Culture Researcher's observations:

One night on the Johnny Cash Show Cash did a bit on tramps. Cash was saying all kinds of things about Tramps which caused a reaction from the Tramps who were watching. It was stated like this:

> "That loudmouth ------ went to prison, and thought up all this ---- about a Tramp. That '--- of a -----' made all kinds of money and never even come close to being one of us. Riding his --- in a car through these farm towns passing these ------- lies with that old 'git-tar.' If he's a Tramp and not a punk, why is it that he was always getting arrested for dope?"
>
> "(As an IR I could observe that the dudes who identified with Mr. Cash were the guys who weren't willing to pay their dues in order to be a real Tramp. They just don't belong.)"

This reaction was not expected by some of the new men. Among the Farm Tramps anyone who had not truly experienced their kind of life was an outsider, a punk, or Johnny-come-lately. If Mr. Cash had been known to ride the rails, work in the fields, and drink a "Mickey" now and then instead of taking dope, he would have been accepted by the Farm Tramps. Because he had not "paid his dues" according to their standards, he was an outsider who didn't know what he was talking about.

The Farm Tramp must be strong and never let anyone get away with anything. He has a freedom that few people on the outside have, and he is willing to pay the price: "You can

treat a Tramp any way you want, but he ain't going to be your fool (flunky). And if some dude ----- with you, a Tramp ain't going to forget. Now, he might not say anything right off, but when he gets you in his territory, he'll 'Cop-a-Sunday' (drop a rock on your head) and you ain't even gonna know what hit you."

There are heroes and bad guys in this sub-culture. The Farm Tramps tell stories of the greatest hobo who ever lived. "This guy set up 'jungles' from Canada to Mexico, so we always had a place to go no matter where we were." The bad guys are called "Mission Stiffs." They are about the same as an "Uncle Tom" on the outside. "Mission Stiffs" are men willing to take a "nose dive" to get a bunk and a meal from a mission like the "Sally." "Now we ain't saying Farm Tramps don't use the missions, because they do, but they only do it as a last resort and get out as soon as possible. A 'Mission Stiff' works for the mission and will tell the preacher anything he wants to hear just so he can get out of working for what he gets. 'Mission Stiffs' sell their souls, they ain't men, they got no pride."

Farm Tramps have learned to tolerate the police, but since the destruction of "Skid Row" the situation has changed. When "Skid Row" existed, the police didn't bother them much if they stayed in their part of town. Now they have been forced into town, and citizens don't want these "disorderly" persons cluttering their parks and malls. "People want to eat but don't want to have Farm Workers walking the streets of their town." Farm Workers consider themselves outsiders; they are easy to pick out in a town with no "Skid Row" or in a section of a town where they feel they don't belong. In this case, they get out as quickly as possible. To do this they may "catch a blinder," which means to catch a passenger train rather than a freight train. A passenger train isn't easy to ride, because they must stand up all the way on the outside between the cars. On the passenger train the engineer watches the track straight ahead, and sits on the left side of the train. The fireman is on the right looking after the rear of the train; so the left side of the train is the "blind" side where the Farm Worker boards to the nearest town with a "Skid Row."

Farm Workers call the courts "Kangaroo Courts" because the judge sentences 10 or 20 men at once to 40 days or a "kick out" with 40 days hanging over their heads. They feel the court doesn't care whether they're innocent or guilty. The only question is how much time they'll be sentenced to, which they say depends on how much free labor the County

needs at the "Elks Club" (Road Camp, Elk Grove.)

Farm Workers live a life where the only alternative to a bad situation is to "hit the road." Now this is becoming more and more difficult because redevelopment and farm mechanization are occurring nationwide. They have learned that the most effective way of surviving is one day at a time. They concern themselves daily with meeting their basic human needs of food, clothing, and shelter; no more, no less.

Here is a typical case study done on a single Farm Worker.

I. C. R. Case Study

The conversation started like this: "Hi, Mr. X. The higher-ups in this organization (SSSG) tell me you are one of the oldest members here." Mr. X rose up immediately from his bunk and asked quickly, "What higher-ups?" I replied to this by saying, "The heads of the organization; you do consider yourself a member, don't you?" He stated: "Hell yes, but the heads of the organization, I don't know about (angrily). Since the President has just gotten out of the thing, and let this wine-drinking punk kid from the Housing Authority come in here getting a salary just to stand and walk around like a prize cock, and drink wine all day. It puzzled the hell out of me. Myself and all the older members think its a rotten mistake to allow this, when he (Chacon) could have let some poor Tramp have that job. This guy knows nothing about Farm Workers and also he has his home and money. What the hell does he care about us? We older guys were with this organization when it started. So I can see something is wrong. He (Chacon) was the only leader and now there is no discipline and when you don't have that, you got nothing. All these 'Johnny-come-latelys' are taking over, with wine drinking, loudmouthing from morning till night, and they are all 'fly-by-nighters' anyway. Things, I hope, will change back to what they was on Second Street in that old place we had. That's when Chacon and Jenkins was running the place."

He kept talking about the coming elections (SSSG election). I asked whether he had his candidates already in mind? "Hell yes!" he replied.

Then he went on to state how important rules were and that if you broke them how you had to be ready to take the consequences. He said there were always rules on the jobs he had had, such as farm worker, dishwasher, and hide shaker, and that he broke some of those rules but was always willing to pay the price.

He said, "This place here is nice if it was run right. Those in charge drink alone, and that's all right, but they ain't got no call to fight the older guys physically when they been drinking." (Sometimes the young men in the office drag the older men around when they have been drinking, especially at night when the big shots go home.)

Then he talked a little about farm work: "Labor camps and contractors are a rotten bunch. A 'day-haul' out of this place (2700 Front Street) would be a good deal since there ain't no place to live downtown anymore. But we have to come up with some way to control daily payoff, which would cause allnight drinking, and no sleep for others who wish to work daily."

On the subject of the County Work bus: "I would rather go out on it than to stay in this place and listen to all these loudmouth want-to-be bosses. Its not enough money, and sometimes conditions are very bad and worse for some of the older men. But any man wants to be useful. So I take the bus just to get away from these loudmouth house captains."

He continued, "The social workers, vouchers, eating places, police, etc., I've learned to tolerate! Fifteen years in this County and I've never made road camp, yet!

"The organization and the place is kinda like home to me. I always look forward to coming back even just to see how much it has improved, if any. And there's hope, but Tramps are a funny bunch to organize. It has been tried many times."

I. C. R. Case Study

One man has expressed exceptional regard for honesty and has seen much of what he calls dishonesty. He indicates that he has let many opportunities pass him by because of feeling that some kind of dishonest actions would be involved.

His philosophy about being a Tramp is to not feel sorry for another Tramp except if he has fallen drunk and is in the path of a moving vehicle such as a train or something. Other than that, don't become involved. He judges a man "ok" from sight, and looks for him to show his dishonesty later on. This is what he looks for, and this is what he seems to find. That is his reason for not becoming involved.

The "mainstream" of society for him would involve him with others too much and too closely. This would, he feels, cause him to become unknowingly involved in some type of dishonesty. He says he knows this to be true because he has seen it all around him, especially in the small town where he was born and raised. He saw so much so-called

dishonesty among all the townspeople. At a young age he was involved in much of the dishonesty in that town. He was a runner, messenger, and matchmaker (pimp) for a local whorehouse. This is also the reason he claims marriage could never be for him.

II. Hustlers

Approximately 5% of the men housed at the center were identified as "Hustlers." These are generally younger than Farm Workers. Although many Hustlers had done farm work on occasion, they usually claimed to have some type of skilled trade they could rely on in time of need. At times, members of this group would admit to being Farm Workers when it was in their best interest to do so. They were more aggressive and much more "wordy" than the Farm Workers. They were willing and able to deal with institutions such as welfare, and they concentrated on getting everything they could from such institutions. These men were users; that is, they used others to get what they needed. Farm Workers had as little to do with this group as possible. The Hustlers borrowed money from the office workers and especially from the Misfits. Then they "cut out" without ever repaying it. They were the most versatile of the three groups, capable of dealing with any situation and in most cases coming out on top.

They made it clear that they weren't like the rest of the men: "I ain't no Tramp." When asked if they would return next year, the usual response was, "Not if I can help it, this place reminds me of the Road Camp and I am just making my time easy." They hustled the center just as they did the Road Camp.

The Hustlers were constantly scheming to get on regular General Assistance so they could live uptown; some of them made it, others didn't.

This case study is typical of the Hustlers even though this man was not as lucky as some of the others.

I. C. R. Case Study

"The organization is a great place to come to get yourself together, and a place to sleep. But I am not going to be around long, so I don't care to know much about the place. It's just like the Road Camp, and I always have it easy out there, and it will be the same in here.

"I have a wife who is very stupid and six beautiful kids. And she put me out, so here I am.

"I am a mattress maker by trade for 25 years, but I have had enough of the same old thing over and over again making mattresses.

"I've been in jail many times for drunk and messing up, but I'll make it!"

This man came in very proud. He stated he was better than "these punks," and that they could "take this dump and shove it; I'll be out of here in about three days!" After two days in camp he began to tell me about his cracked rib. He said three big guys jumped him and beat him up, leaving him with a cracked rib. As we talked he said, "I am going to the hospital, and get uptown in a hotel and get out of this ------- place." During this time he was very quiet and cool toward the fellows.

He went to the hospital and came back "looped" (drunk). This was a celebration of sorts for his expected move uptown, because he thought he had got away with his little hustle. He started to get loud, and the fellows became his insulting conversational piece. He was feeling pretty good there--for a while, that is--until he found that his plans had failed. He is still here and feeling bad. In fact, he talks to no one, approaching others only to pick and choose who to ask for a cigarette.

The Hustlers could not survive in the Farm Tramps' world, so they weren't much interested in them, their place, or their organization. The Hustlers must keep their connections with "mainstream" society, the "fools" who keep the Hustlers going. "Straight people are easy hustles."

The Hustler's philosophy is to use any means necessary to "make it."

III Misfits

A third group at the center is referred to by the Research Team as Misfits. This group consisted of about 23% of the men. They were predominantly white, and younger than the Farm Workers. They were forced (or felt forced) into this situation for reasons other than being Farm Workers, although most had done some farm work. These men identified with the staff, the white man from the Housing Authority, the social workers, and people with "authority." They were living in this center but had the aspirations, admirations, and desires for the so-called "good life" of mainstream society. The Misfits, unlike the Hustlers (who wanted about the same things), were willing to gain the "good life in the manner prescribed by mainstream society. They rejected the Farm Tramp's world, and the

feeling was mutual, with the Farm Tramps considering them "Johnny-come-latelies." Hustlers viewed Misfits as unlucky members of straight society to use to get what they needed (jobs, etc.). They were usually readily accepted as the most responsible by the staff, so they got the inside jobs; they were easy to use. This group either had or wished to have a taste of the so-called "good life." So they viewed the center as temporary, wanting out as soon as possible. Unlike the Hustlers, however, they were not willing to use any means necessary. They would escape by getting a "good job." Like the Farm Workers they were embarrassed because they were on welfare; but unlike the Farm Worker they were much more at ease in dealing with the bureaucracy if they considered it necessary.

Following are case studies of this type of man:

I. C. R. Case Study

"I know and think it's a fine organization (SSSG). It has been good to me since I've been a member. I was outside, no place to go, and a fellow told me about it, so I came and was welcomed.

"Sure I would have been arrested and I already feel like a second-class citizen. I lost my car, my money, and all my clothes. Now I have to take just enough welfare to exist. Can't get help to get my car or any of my clothes, so I feel I am just another number added to the welfare pennies. In my case all I asked for was a place and some way to get my car to go back home, but no, so here I am.

"I've taken all the training available to me now, and do wish there was more. Wish it could be year-around, class after class in something we could learn to give us a real chance at a job."

He is a small man but has a big, big heart. So he tries to live up to this reputation. But being the good guy landed him in with the Hustlers, who are good guys in a different way. The Hustlers don't have much money, but they do share their wine to show they are good guys too. Now he is their victim. He now wants out of the environment, but has no way.

He says everyone in charge here is very nice to him. His thing is to make peace among the men. He wants people to like him so very much. From what I have seen, he does a fine job of making peace when others wish to fight.

He said that he always wanted to be a doctor, helping people. The result is that all the material things he can obtain, he gives to his so-called friends. The Farm Worker,

to him, is a person in need, and when he gets out of here and on his feet he is going to do whatever he can for them. His friends are always the ones sick for the next drink, and he becomes the doctor with the remedy whenever he has the money.

He doesn't belong here, so why can't he have the money to get his car out of being impounded and go home, since he has one?

I. C. R. Interview

It's 2:30 a.m. and I am perched in the "crapper" (men's room). Reason: I have no other place to write. There are two other men up here because they can't sleep. I find their thoughts are so much like my own and they had to be expressed.

The men, I will refer to as "X" and "Y." "X" is not really a full-time or part-time farm worker. Now he is caught up in a culture which is strange to him in many ways. At this moment I feel somewhat the same, I notice things are changing right under our noses, and I am having a difficult time with anxieties and patience. Because at this time I seek for constructive communication as to what is happening to us and our culture right now. But all talk seems to be about the past (2nd Street and how it used to be), and the thought patterns are completely negative. I say this because at the moment I am disgusted with this change occurring right there in our midst. There have been more guys wanting to talk to me, and I've obliged them. In so doing I am realizing that the same thing is happening to me as is happening to them. We are at the point now where everything is falling apart. On the 31st (March) they are going to close the place down. Some of the guys are hustling and scheming trying to get uptown on G.A. (General Assistance). Others are uptight because they don't know what they are going to do if they can find no work. The old guys aren't too concerned about anything except they would like to see the place open so they could catch the day-haul out of here. But if it doesn't happen, they know they will survive one day at a time. Everything always seems to be just a dream away.

Now the two men I am talking with are both young men. Both have been in institutions (Army, Prison, Reform School).

Subject "X" has been here about three weeks and came here with a pure disgust. "X" didn't like the place or anything about it. "X" stated, "I am only interested in one thing, get a job or some way get out of here as quick as possible." "X" said, "If I have to stay in this place, man, it will make me blow my mind. These people (Farm Workers) think

and talk funny!" He went on to say: "I've dropped many types of stuff, you know, for a good-time blast, but some of these dudes just seem to drink that wine just for the sake of a drink. And then they only talk of the old times. They only seem to dig the past. Then there are the dudes who dig verbally tearing down anybody who has anything on the ball."

"X" had a future. He stated that he thumbed his way from West Virginia after getting out of the Army, two or three months ago, in search of a different place and a job. "X" had never worked before, but wants a job to build his bankroll so he can get a wardrobe and a car.

"X" was very nervous and also became sick. He felt that being thrown in this place cut him off from communication that could be helpful.

As for me, I felt the same because of what I have learned while I have been working on this research project.

"Y" had been here four or five months. He was seriously interested in the organization and the men. He was smart, but quite shy about talking to rude people. He was honest, free hearted, and very tolerant of others. He was also very eager to work at anything.

My feeling was that he had let the Hustlers (those who hang around the office counter, called "loudmouths" by the Farm Workers) know these qualities, and was made nervous by hoping that they wouldn't take advantage of him. From my own observations I knew it was just a matter of time before they would, and they did. "Y" had such good ideas it made me angry. Once I cautioned him to be careful, because things he had hoped for were getting so close and those dudes will make you blow it all.

Subject "Y" stated he was getting pretty fed up with how some of the guys hassle him all the time, like telling him they were going to make a "punk" (queer) out of him and trying to put a mop head on him and making statements about ------- him each and every morning. "Y" said he tried to get out early and away "before that ----" started because, "I don't like to be bothered when I get up in the morning."

I was really "ticked off" when I could see they would grab some of his personal articles just to delay him from getting out of the place, so as to have what they called "fun" with him. This kept him always uptight.

"Y" called himself a "long-time" Tramp, but this kind of stuff never happened to him while on the road, only when he was locked up in institutions. He was a so-called homely type who wore horn-rimmed glasses and didn't dress too well. Some had the gall to use this to hassle him.

But right now he seems to have had all he can take, and the weather ain't too bad, so it looks as if it's time for him to get out. He did get out and hasn't been heard from since. He had no real home, so he is, I am sure, Tramping again.

I have tried to present a general idea of who lived at the center, how they viewed themselves, and the place where they lived. There are no hard and fast lines, but most of the men who lived at the center fell into one of the three groups. Some were able to make it in more than one group, but not many. The conflict which existed there was not always in the open; when it came out, it was usually in a violent way, as you will see later in this paper.

PART II

Housing

In one aspect the Housing Center at 2700 Front Street was very successful. That is, it provided a physically adequate place for men to live. The following questions in a questionnaire developed by the In-Culture Research Team deal specifically with the housing conditions at 2700 Front Street.

Fifty-one men, all living at the center, were asked the following questions:

I. Housing

A. Clean place to live.

Explanation - 100% of the men questioned thought the center was cleaner than most of the hotels they could afford in town because they had clean sheets, toilets, and floors.

Response - Yes, 51.

No, 0.

B. Would be in the weeds.

Explanation - 94% of the men questioned said that if this housing was not available, they would be living in holes beneath the sidewalks, vacant lots, river banks, other people's cars, and abandoned buildings because there are no longer any cheap housing facilities in Sacramento.

Response - Yes, 48.

No, 3.

C. Would get arrested.

Explanation - 66 2/3% of the men questioned said they would not get themselves arrested as a means of providing themselves shelter during the winter. 33 1/3% of the men questioned said they would or have gotten themselves arrested in order to make it through the winter now that their community has been destroyed. "I seen a man throw a rock through a store window and wait for the cops to come; that ain't no lie."

Response - Yes, 17.

No, 34.

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D. Cleaner than labor camps.

Explanation - Labor Camps are places where Farm Workers live when they are working. They are run by labor contractors and farmers. It costs $3.50 a day to eat and sleep in these places, and most aren't fit for people; they are filthy.

96% of the men questioned agreed that the 2700 Front Street center was cleaner by far than any labor camp.

Two men had no comment.

Response - Yes, 49.

No, 0.

No comment, 2.

E. Sleep in peace.

Explanation - In many of the places they are forced to live (labor camps, weeds, box cars, etc.) they have to sleep with one eye open because, "If the cops don't get you, the thieves and 'Jack Rollers' will." 100% of the men agreed they could sleep in peace at the center.

Response - Yes, 51.

No, 0.

F. Recreation.

Explanation - 88% of the men questioned on this subject said that what recreation was available was "ok." But there should be more for the older men to do, such as horseshoe pits and maybe some kind of crafts, because they can't play basketball and badminton.

12% of the men questioned said they didn't care about recreation one way or the other.

Response - Ok, 45.

Don't care, 6.

As you will see, if the mission of the Housing Authority was simply to meet the physical needs for shelter during the winter months, that goal was accomplished. If the goal was to provide housing with pride and dignity, the Housing Authority's success is questionable. We deal with this aspect of the housing in the section immediately following.

PART III

From Home-To-Institution-To-Mission

Following is the history of some of the problems encountered during the winter in the 2700 Front Street center. As previously stated, the Research Team believes the center merely met the physical needs of the men for shelter. It was a place where they could get out of the rain and off the street to avoid being arrested. It also provided most of the men with a change from the filth of the labor camps where they live during the working season.

With the physical needs met, problems still existed of which housing officials should be aware, especially if they are to provide housing which is not only physically adequate but allows a man (Tramp, Misfit, or Hustler) some pride and dignity. Nobody will call an institution or flophouse "home."

The problems which plagued the housing center can be summed up in these terms: confusion, unfilled promises, and a clash of different cultures.

The men of the Farm Tramp culture came to the center thinking it belonged to their organization; they thought it would function like the housing they had experienced on 2nd Street, which was operated entirely by SSSG and relied heavily on the participation of the men. For example, the dormitory was nothing more than an empty warehouse which the men made livable with some help from skilled carpenters, plumbers, and electricians, who gave advice while the men did the work. The same was true for the referral office and kitchen. The Farm Tramps were cooks, dishwashers, runners, and hustlers. Anything that could not be supplied by the community, the men hustled. They also held meetings and set rules, and everyone made sure the rules were followed. Every man was important and felt good about it. They were proud of the home they had had a hand in building.

The Farm Tramps approached the 2700 Front Street housing with the same willingness and expectations. It is vital for them to feel they are doing work they can be proud of, not only for themselves but for all the men. For example, in the Farm Tramp culture every man does a task which contributes to survival of all the men and to his pride in himself. The following, a quote taken from a tape recording made during an In-Culture Research Meeting, exemplifies this point:

"As we have really nothing that we can claim as ours to be proud of, we pick things that happen around us and make them important and this makes you feel good. Now,

you got a guy who can cook and you got a guy who knows words and how to get stuff. When you are jungling, these guys are important. The guys that are staying in the jungle picks the man with the best words, best clothes, and the best know-how to get stuff, and he is the Runner. He gots to have all these things so as he won't get bothered by the police. Then this Runner goes up town and bums some money, and gets food and stuff and a little Mickey for the boys and he brings this stuff back to camp. Then the Pot Man cooks all this stuff in a pot and everybody feels good and we have a little taste, you know what I mean?"

The Farm Tramps expected to play similar kinds of roles at the 2700 Front Street center. Some tried to develop these roles but found it difficult; those who succeeded often found that the anticipated response was not forthcoming.

As time passed all the men became confused about who was running the place and who they were running it for. Evidence of this confusion is mirrored in the varied responses to the question: "Do you know who is in charge here at the center?" Fifty-one men responded in the following ways: 11%, the Housing Authority; 22%, Chacon and the Single Men; 41%, Jenkins and some guy; 15%, didn't know; 6%, Chacon and Jenkins; and 5%, Louie Mendonsa. It is even more significant that nearly all responses were prefaced with, "I don't know for sure, but I think..." or a similar qualification.

The Farm Workers clashed head-on with the Hustlers and Misfits, who viewed the housing as an institution and only a temporary situation. Hustlers and Misfits were more concerned with making it within the institution rather than building a place to call "home."

The men were promised tools and supplies so they could make the center a real nice home, but the promises were not followed by action. For a time they were willing to work around the place, but they never seemed to get the tools they had been promised. Finally the Farm Workers dropped out more or less because they began to see the center as a clean flophouse where they merely had to do what they were told--nothing more, nothing less--and wait for the farm jobs to open in the spring.

Feelings and morale changed during the year from one of hope to one of institutionalization. We will cite examples and incidents which resulted from this situation.

When the center opened, in October 1969, much work was still to be done to make the place livable. There were bunks to be set up and lockers to be picked up and put together. The men pitched in to do the necessary work, and some worked more than the required three

days (Appendix B). Morale was very high at that time; all felt useful because they were contributing their share toward building the center. The "Bull Sessions" began with the men making suggestions, giving ideas which were (or seemed to be) taken seriously by Chacon and Jenkins. Chacon and Jenkins told the men that the Housing Authority would soon send them tools, like saws, hammers, and gardening equipment, plus other materials; if everyone worked around the place, there would be no need for the County work bus. The men seemed to appreciate this because most of them had experienced the County work bus the previous year. The men held meetings to make rules for the barracks (lights out, TV hours, no locked doors, etc.). They also picked Barracks Chiefs. There were problems, but they seemed to be working out. (For example, there was a shortage of blankets, but Chacon took care of that problem.) At that time the men were in good spirits. Some scrounged their own tools and began to plant flowers around the "proposed" recreation room; others tried to find white paint to paint the tree trunks. Some of the men wanted to put their gardening skills to use at the center. These were men involved in the Grounds Keeper school at the Sacramento Skill Center; they were full of ideas. One man (a four-year veteran of SSSG and at least 25 years as a Farm Worker) wanted to take care of the hedge in front of "A Barracks." He was going to sculpture it in some special way. Anyone who would listen was shown the hedge while he explained his idea. One man walked to the Housing Authority and asked for the equipment to do the lawns. Mr. Larry Kurmel told him to "keep cool, stick it out, and it's going to be a good deal." But he left empty-handed. Some men said if they only had the tools, they could put partitions up between the bunks. (One man knew where to get the wood.)

The men continued to meet and hear of the things the Housing Authority would get for them, but they could only listen for so long before they began to feel nothing was going to happen. Then they began to lose interest. The County work bus began to show up every morning, and the center seemed to be more like a prison or County Farm than the home everyone had come to expect. Another constant reminder of unfilled promises was a combination washer-dryer sitting in the TV area. The men were told that when the tools were here and the City plumber came, they could build a small laundry house next to "B Barracks." The machine sat there for months; when it was finally set up (minus the house), the men had nothing to do with it. The same was true for the lawns; they became worse and worse because no equipment was made available to the men. The lawns were cut only twice, both

times by the Housing Authority, while the men sat around and watched. Then there were the Horseshoe Pits. A man from the Housing Authority came over, got some of the men together, and measured a proposed site. The men scrounged some material from the freeway construction trash pile to build the pit, but they never saw that Housing Authority man again.

Around the middle of December, Chacon called a "Bull Session" to tell the men he planned to quit the Housing Authority. He thought he could get the tools and materials promised if he pressured the Housing Authority from the outside. At that point in time the morale was pretty low. The men were talking bad about the County work bus. Following is a quote from an interview with a Farm Worker from "C Barracks:"

Interviewer: "What do you think of the work bus? Do you think it serves any useful purpose?"

Man: "Work bus don't do no good for me but some guys see it as a way to get away from this place. But it also makes most seem like a prisoner for the County Farm and there just ain't enough money to compensate for that feeling. Seventy cents a day paid after you've worked ain't very much of an incentive. I feel that it's a force so you have to conform. Most all the guys feel like that, I would say. The peoples think you are a dangerous criminal who's paying his debt to the so-called society. The only way it could serve a useful purpose is to pay a living wage to give one the pride of doing a job to earn his own way. Even if they could just change the name on that bus to Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group would make it better."

Although things were not going very well or as well as the men expected, they did seem to be getting along (at least outwardly).

The final break came when the new man from the Housing Authority came to work at the center. The old guys resented him and claimed he started a "young punk clique" around the office. It seems everyone began to re-evaluate the situation. The Tramps began talking about the linen truck, saying things like, "Who the hell is paying for all this service. Next thing you know they'll be telling us when to change our sheets." They complained about some of the men who got the inside jobs and the older men having to work on the County bus. The men never did like the bus, and the linen truck had been coming regularly all along, but now the men were starting to put their feelings into words.

At a "Bull Session" the new man from the Housing Authority suggested that the men should alternate work duties, but it was too late. It seems the lines had been drawn and nothing ever came of that proposal.

The Farm Workers seemed confused about Chacon's role at the center; some even felt abandoned. This feeling was illustrated in the Farm Worker Case Study cited earlier. The Misfits were drawn to the young man from the Housing Authority because they could relate to him better than to Jenkins. The Hustlers related well to anyone who seemed to be in a position of power or anyone close to such a person. The following incident illustrates how the Hustlers operated after the center became an institution.

I. C. R. Incident Study

This incident occurred after the new man from the Housing Authority arrived. The Pot had been a part of the place since the center opened.

The Pot is what the men call any utensil used to cook food, sometimes on a hotplate, sometimes over an open fire. The man who does the cooking is called the "Pot Man." He cooked up a Pot just about every day. The money for the food was put up by the rest of the men in the center, and food was there for anyone who wanted it except the paid staff. It saved the new men, just in off the road and not yet processed by the welfare office. It's an old part of the Tramp culture.

This incident involved two men. Subject "A" was the original Pot Man. He was also a Farm Worker. "A" collected pennies, nickels, bus tokens, etc., and went to different grocery stores to make some kind of deal for all the items to go in the Pot. He was really good and could get many items many ways. "A" cooked only for the hungry men and never bothered to eat himself until all had something to eat. He cooked for only the hungry men and never for the paid staff. If he would have done that, it would have been just like working for the Salvation Army. "A" always looked forward to doing the Pot. He said, "I feel good inside, like I am a part of something." "A" appeared quite proud in appearance and spirit.

"B" was the challenger. (He was also what we call a Hustler. He later left the place owing everyone money--everyone, that is, except the Farm Workers.) "B" was scheming very hard to get control of making the Pot. "B" discovered how important the Pot really was. He could see that it made one popular, dependable, and gave more verbal freedom in

order to get the soft jobs and avoid having to go out on the work bus. It also would give him the privilege of drinking his wine and the wine of others who felt they should share with him to repay for the pot. "B" also discovered something "A" didn't know. That is, he could fool the guys and collect money and stuff from them for the Pot and then turn around and collect money from the office people, whom he hustled to cover all his expenses.

IR Observations	IR Feelings of Happenings
Subject "B" arrived in camp about a month and half after subject "A." He acted quite humble at first but soon started to get buddy-buddy with "A."	"B" seemed to recognize "A" as a popular guy. I thought it was probably because "A" was the only other black dude in the place.
"B" started to hustle with "A" and became a partner. "B" would go with "A" to pick up all the food for the Pot. "B" was learning how and where to get the goodies.	It seemed to me that "B" was accumulating food and funds to start his own Pot for when the time was right for the takeover.
"B" was not contributing anything for the Pot except moral support for "A" and the privilege to eat.	I felt that "B" was trying to show "A" as irresponsible.
"B" was functioning as storage man for "A" and also keeping watch over the wine, which was kept in "B's" locker.	
"A" was the kind of guy who shared wine with others.	
(several days later)	
"B" observed "A" sharing the wine with others.	
"B" said to "A" that "A" was losing his wine to others. "B" refused to give "A" wine.	"B" seems to have been waiting for this kind of trap so as to provoke "A."
(Sunday)	
"B" made a Pot with the accumulated food and spread the rumor that "A" was broke and finished.	

"B" then says to "A" loudly in front of other people while walking up and down the aisle near "A's" bunk: "You are a ------ ----, ----------. This ---------- owes me. When are you going to pay up ------- ------." "A" says: "I didn't know you were that way, man. I don't owe you, but whatever it is I will pay you."

"B" kept on talking louder. Then he walked away and sat on his bunk. "A" remarked to one of his friends: "I don't like this, but I didn't know the guy was like that." "B" heard this, jumped up, and rushed back to "A's" bunk: "What did you say, ----------? ----------, you don't know me. I'll drag your ---off of that bunk." (Repeats three or four times.) "A" just laughed nervously. "A" rose up off his bunk and said to "B," "You mean that, don't you."

"B" says, "Damn right, ----------. I don't play! Come on outside." "A" says quietly as he lies back down on his bunk: "That's all right, man. I pay you and never mess with you again. The guys aren't going to like you anyway, because you talk so loudly about how much the guys eat." "B" screams out, "I am going to see, ----------." (Repeated) "We will see

I got real nervous and angry, because "A" was a good and peaceful man and the word "---------- " makes me squirm anyway. "A" seemed scared and embarrassed and proposed to pay in order to stop the argument. "A" didn't seem to owe "B." "B" seemed to want to fight for reputation and seemed to feel ignored by "A's" statements. I thought it was all over and wished that "B" would stay at his bunk and shut his mouth.

I hoped "A" would kick him right in the mouth.

Now "A" was winni as I like to see it, ignoring the dude.

"A" seemed to be surprised that "B" would keep pushing the issue.

I wanted "A" to really show me he had guts. I question, where are his principles?

"B" looked a bit surprised at that statement but made himself comfortable by by going over and putting some salt and pepper in the Pot.

I hoped they wouldn't eat a bite; I was

when it's (food) done."

"B" takes money he saved and all the food in his locker and makes another Pot just when the new men arrived and all are hungry. He had more men to eat than food to give them.

"B" made sure of himself by asking each man personally, "How was the Pot?" and "Wasn't it good?"

disgusted.

"A" just gets drunk and kind of stays by himself. "A" doesn't have anything to say to "B" at all.

"B" makes a great impression on all the new men and seems to feel his mission is accomplished.

The Pot put "B" where he wanted to be, and he made it easy. The Farm Tramp views the Pot as a means of survival; because of this importance the Pot Man is a necessary person. In this case the Pot was not something necessary to "B's" survival; but it did represent a tool which (if used properly) could ensure a better quality of survival for him. Control and use of the Pot gave "B" a position from which he could bargain. Therefore, he sought control of it by any means necessary. This same type of action occurs in institutions such as prisons.

The "Bull Sessions" dropped off rapidly. The Farm Workers felt that the "clique" had become solid. They thought they were being ignored, ridiculed, and viewed as useless. They were angry and resentful of how they were treated both verbally and physically. After five o'clock, the center turned into a real jungle; that is, the older men were often physically abused by the younger men, especially the street dudes (Hustlers). The older men knew these Hustlers as "Jack Rollers," the same ones who hung around the Greyhound Bus Depot. As you can see, the center became a real institution with the same problems which exist in such institutions as jails and prisons. Even the physical appearance of the center looked like a jail, with the high fence and barbed wire. This feeling and hostility caused the following incident, which probably illustrates what was happening better than any other single event.

I. C. R. Incident Study

A fight occurred around the time of the SSSG elections. One of the participants, subject "A," was a Farm Worker, and the other was a Misfit, a member of the so-called

"young punk clique."

"A" was interviewed by another Researcher but later talked to me. It went like this: "I am a Farm Worker because I don't have the education. But the Farm Workers should organize in some way. I like the President (Chacon) of the group, but I don't like what has happened in the place (center). Those young Punks come in there and take over as they have. We should have thrown the ---------- out. What the hell are they doing in a place like this? The ---------- should be out working. When I was their age, I was out doing all kinds of stuff. They ain't Farm Workers and they have a 'young punk clique' in that office. And me and the rest of the guys don't like it. I think some of the older guys should have those jobs in the office and put those punks on the bus." (The office is a place in the front of "A Barracks." It has two desks, two bunks, and a few other office items. This is where the Housing Authority processes the new men who come in.)

"A's" resentment was building more and more, and now an old-time Farm Worker friend, whom we will call "B," began to tell "A" at the group elections about the "punks" in the office and how he felt about them.

What Happened	IR Feelings and Men Involved
"B" says, "I think they should throw those guys out."	"A's" eyes light up and he stands up. I question whether the older men would really do the paper work in the office.
"A" says, "I've told the president about that punk in the office (Housing Authority man) and all the rest how I felt."	I moved toward the clique member to keep them apart.
One of the clique members comes through the door.	Explanation of "the clique:" It's a group of younger guys who work in and around the office doing the paper work, answering the phone, etc. They also serve sometimes as barracks orderlies when the main Barracks Chiefs are absent. In so doing they seem to have developed a "speak-together-at-others" attitude of loudness that gains

them so-called respect among the older men. They use much profanity and rudeness toward the older men. As a researcher, I have observed them treat the older men very cruelly, and I hate seeing them threatened with bodily harm and sometimes dragged to their bunks.

"A" says: "Here comes one of the --------
--------now." "A" gets up again and moves toward the clique member.

The clique member has a fruit jar in his hand and is fixing to fill it with beer which was donated for all the men. "B" says, "He don't plan to fill that damn jar up, I hope."

"A" says: "Hell no; that ----------
ain't going to get ---- until he gets a cup like the rest of us.

"C" says, "What the hell is wrong? I'm not getting this jar filled alone for me. It's for some others in the office too."

"A" loudly calls out, "I don't give a damn who it's for. You ain't going to fill that -------jar." Then "A" grabs hold of the jar in "C's" hand.

"A" says "You're ------ right we ain't going to have that jar business." "A" continues to get louder, talking about the incident and his resentment of "C" and the clique.

I see "A" has been drinking, and I get a bit nervous.

"B" sits quietly and is looking at "A," and I am looking at the clique member (call him "C").

I didn't want to show that I was on either side. I wanted peace.

I am embarrassed by "C" showing up with a jar.

"A" then tries to get to "C" but I get in his way.

I turn to talk to "C" and try to explain to him why he shouldn't use this big jar.

"B" is just looking on.

"B" leaves the room and goes in the other place, where he gets in his bunk. "B" seems to want to stay out of any real face-to-face conflict with "C" because the clique might get him.

"A" seems to pick up some support from other guys, but only in words.

"A" has a few more drinks and soon comes inside where "B" is.

"B" tells "A" why he left. "B" says, "I don't want to be or work around the --- holes. They are all looking for something to steal."

"A" says, "I'm going to still get a chance to tell the ------ what I think about them."

"A" then begins to call "C" and his friends all a bunch of ----------.

"A" moves toward the office where "C" and company is.

"A" sits down in the TV area. His face is very red and he seems to be looking for a face-to-face showdown.

"A" continues to talk loudly, calling to "C" and company, "Any of you ------- want to take me on or don't you like it?"

One of "C's" friends says, "I've had enough," and says, "Who in the hell are you talking to?"

Everyone becomes very quiet. I felt that it had to happen because "A" is really pushing.

"A" gets up but reels, indicating that he is about drunk but itching for a fight.

"A" states, "Any one of you ------- that don't like what I've said."

"C's" friend says, "Come on outside, I am ------- tired of all this ----, I don't have to hear all this ----." Then he starts for the door.

"C's" friend has gotten very nervous because "A" is a very big man.

"A" gets up and staggers out the door also and says, "Let's go, ---- ; I'll show you."

They square off for the fight.

"A" looks as if he can hardly see this guy, let alone fight him.

"A" punches out, but it doesn't land near his mark.

"C's" friend punches once and once again,

"C's" friend walks back inside with a

and down goes "A."

"A" gets to his feet, says he ain't going to forget this, and walks back to the rest of the guys.

sigh of relief and states, "He was a big ------ baby."

The feelings which provoked this incident had been present for quite a while but had been expressed only in conversations between the Tramps and in interviews with certain members of the Research Team. The Research Team feels it would never have come out in this violent form had it not been for the SSSG election meeting. Both the election and the fight happened the same day. The election meeting and party took place in a room behind "A Barracks." The Farm Tramps stayed for the whole thing; the Hustlers and Misfits came only for food and beer, then left. With all the Farm Workers together, the center probably seemed like theirs again; it seemed as if it was their territory. As mentioned earlier, when a Farm Tramp feels he has been wronged, he does not forget; he waits until the opponent is in "his territory," then he takes action. Because of the activities of the day, this appears to be how subject "A" viewed the center. When the "clique man" walked in the door, it was time to "take action."

The hostilities which existed and wrongs which the Tramps felt had been committed against them became real in the person of the "clique man." He represented all those things and represented the people who caused the men to lose their center. The time and place were right to even the score.

These ill feelings continued throughout the rest of the program. There was a sign of hope and the morale was a little better when SSSG submitted its proposal to the City Council to keep the place open on a year-round pay-as-you-go basis. The men were encouraged by that move, and 50 or 60 men went with Chacon to the City Council to support the idea. This high morale lasted only a short time because the plan was turned down. If the City had merely turned the men down and let it go at that, it wouldn't have been too bad. They were prepared for that; but when the City gave the center to the Salvation Army, the feeling among the men was that they were right back where they started from three years ago: back on the "mission trail." Almost all the men moved out shortly after this "insult." In one short season we seemed to have gone from "Home-to-Institution-to-Mission."

PART IV

Recommendations

The Research Team makes the following recommendations, based on the experience of the past season (1969-70) and the need of housing for single men in the Sacramento area. It is our hope any action taken on these recommendations is done in such a way that the sub-culture to which a majority of these men belong is taken into consideration.

A permanent housing center for single employable men should be provided in the city of Sacramento. This housing, whether it be a new facility or the existing facility at 2700 Front Street, should include the following:

1) The men should be able to participate more fully in the housing in the following ways.

   A) They should be given tools and materials so they can work around the center to make it into a home they (and the general public) can be proud of. These men have done many kinds of different work and their skills should be put to better use than by sending them on work buses for the County. The buses make the men feel like prisoners. "If nothing else, we are FREE men." If the work bus is necessary the work projects should include a wider range of activities, for example, the building and maintenance of recreational areas such as the American River Parkway. We would also recommend that these work projects and buses be clearly identified as public work projects which will benefit the entire community.

   B) More men would have attended Grounds-Keeper school and Small Gasoline Engine Repair school if they had been allowed to practice their new skills at the center. Not only would they have been learning something, they would also have a reason to be proud of their "center." Mr. Pratt, Instructor at the Skill Center, mentioned to some of the grounds-keeper students that he would be willing to hold classes at the center if some equipment could be provided.

2) The center should be open on a year-round basis with the men paying their own way during the working season. It should be run like a home, not a mission. The Research Team recommends that someone other than "Sally" run the center (the Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group or the Housing Authority). If the center remains open through the working season, it may have a stabilizing effect on the farm labor market. Labor contractors and farmers should be contacted by the City and County

about the availability of labor at the center. There is a possibility this could be accomplished through the University of California at Davis. This could lengthen the working season because growers and contractors would make more effective use of this stable, sober work force. Many growers and contractors did make use of the center in just this way before it was turned into mission.

Everyone of the men interviewed said they would be willing to pay at least $2.00 per night if the center was to remain open.

3) If 2700 Front Street becomes a permanent center, the fences around the center should be covered with shrubbery and the barbed wire removed. The fences and barbed wire reinforced the feeling expressed by the men that the center was indeed an institution, similar in appearance to the "Road Camp." Partitions should be set up between the bunks. The men were and are willing to do this work if provided the materials and tools.

4) A better screening process should be implemented so the men just passing through are housed in separate quarters. Some type of referral system should be worked out. This would allow those men who only need temporary help to get that help. (Such as in the case study of the Misfit.) They should not be put in a situation where they feel they have lost their self-respect. This loss of self-respect, combined with a feeling of lack of control over their lives and situations, does not inspire them to take an active role in the center's activities.

5) If the center is not open year round, it should be opened on or around November 1 and closed on or around April 15 since most work usually begins and ends on these dates. At least with this new time span the men will have work to go to when they are put out of the center.

As we have tried to point out throughout this paper, the men who live at the center must be provided with meaningful roles in the development, operation, and maintenance of the housing facility. If these kinds of opportunities are not provided, they will continue to view the center as an institution of which they are not a necessary part. This feeling makes the housing a degrading experience. What the men really want is housing with pride and dignity. They don't expect it to be given to them, they expect to build it themselves.

Appendix A

Terms

1. Sally: This is what the men call the Salvation Army. On occasion it is referred to as the Starvation Army because all they serve is "bean soup."

2. Ear Banging: This denotes the procedure one must endure before getting a meal at a mission. In regular churches it is called a sermon.

3. Skid Row: This is an area known by many different names depending on your interest or disinterest. To growers who depended on it as a source of labor it was the "Labor Market Area;" to the Redevelopment Agency it was or is "Old Sacramento" or the "Disneyland of the North;" to the police department and most citizens it was Skid Row or "Winoville;" to the 5500* single farm workers who once lived there it was a community which provided for their needs. (*1957 population of Skid Row according to Sacramento Redevelopment Agency.)

4. Jungle out: This is the word the men use when describing how they camp out in the open when they have no money for a room or no rooms are available. The men live outside in small groups; this camp is called the jungle.

5. Dirty Face: Tramps' word for a freight train. The freight train is also called "Smoky Joe."

6. Frisco Circle: A means of getting money. A man makes a circle on the sidewalk then asks passers-by to help the circle by tossing in a dime, nickle or whatever.

7. Cop-a-Sunday: Describes the act of hitting someone in the head, usually when their back is turned.

8. Mission Stiff: Describes a man who constantly hangs around the missions. In straight society he is called a sellout or brown noser. He willingly sits and participates in an ear banging to get a place to eat and sleep.

9. Blinder: Describes the act of boarding a train on the blind side in order to avoid detection. The blind side is the side the engineer sits on, since he watches straight ahead.

10. Kangaroo Court: Denotes Sacramento Municipal Court Department 9. This term also describes other courts in other cities.

11. Kick out: The term describes a legal procedure. When a man is picked up for drinking in public there are two things which can happen when he goes to court: he can be sentenced to County Jail, or he can get a suspended sentence on the condition that if he is picked up during a specified time span, he will go to jail. In the meantime he is free to go back on the street - a kick out.

12. Headen: The act of talking too much. Shooting off one's mouth.

13. Mickey: A small bottle of wine, a little less than a pint. Usually sipped while wrapped in a brown paper bag.

14. Mission Trail: There are missions in every sizeable city from Canada to Mexico and from California to New York. When work is over some men travel from mission to mission. They have developed a circuit which is timed to put them in an area about the time work is to begin.

15. Runner: Describing a man capable of getting food and money without being arrested. The runner brings these items back to the jungle where they are shared by all the men.

16. Flop House: Cheap housing which was once available in Skid Row. They were usually large dormitories; some had private rooms, but they cost more money. They were always dirty, but provided a place to get out of the cold weather.

17. Dude: Another name for a man.

18. Elks Club: Term used for County Jail annex in Elk Grove. Sometimes called the County Road Camp.

19. Sacramento Singlemen Selfhelp Group, Inc.: An organization of single Farm Workers whose goal is to bring social justice to those men who have spent their lives feeding this country.

20. Pot Man: This term describes the man who does the cooking. The cooking is usually done in a big pot.

21. Weed Hotel: This term refers to sleeping in vacant lots, under bridges and under the sidewalks.

Appendix B

Statistical Information

The following information was taken from 774 men who lived for varying lengths of time at the 2700 Front Street Center.

These men were participants in Sacramento County's Single Employable Men's, General Assistance Program. All men on this program had to be employable. They received $2.00 daily in meal tickets redeemable in various restaurants in the city of Sacramento; they also received a bunk at the housing center and $2.10 cash once a week. In return they were required to work three days on County Public Works Projects. The questionnaire, from which the following information is taken, was administered as part of the "in-take" process.

1. Racial composition:

Whites:	426
Blacks:	81
Chicanos:	201
Indians:	64
Asians:	2

2. State or Country born:

The men came from 48 states and 7 foreign countries: Mexico, Canada, Portugal, Czechaslovakia, Ireland, Hungary, and France.
21% of the men were natives of California.
51% of the men came from the following 14 states:

1. Texas - 84
2. Oklahoma - 46
3. New Mexico - 44
4. Arizona - 44
5. Missouri - 24
6. Arkansas - 22
7. Colorado - 17
8. Illinois - 15
9. Louisiana - 15
10. New York - 15
11. Michigan - 14
12. Oregon - 14
13. Washington - 12
14. Tennessee - 12

3. Education (average level of attainment):

Whites:	9.7 grade
Blacks:	9.6 grade
Chicanos:	7.1 grade
Indians:	8.2 grade
Asians:	10.5 grade

Average for all men - 9th grade.
44% had some elementary school education.
48% had some high school education.
1% had no formal education at all.
5% had some college.
7 men had received a G.E.D. certificate.

4. Average Age:

Whites:	43.7 years
Blacks:	41.6 years
Chicanos:	41.6 years
Indians:	41.4 years
Asians:	40.1 years

Average for all men - 41.8 years.

5. Marital Status:

32% or 251 men were divorced.
13% or 103 men were separated.
47% or 365 men were never married.
7% or 55 men were widowed.

6. Veterans Status:

58% or 450 men had served in the Armed Forces.
42% or 323 were non-vets.
1 man did not answer this question.

7. Residence in city of Sacramento:

Whites: average number of years living in Sacramento: 11.2 years
Blacks: average number of years living in Sacramento: 10.4 years
Chicanos: average number of years living in Sacramento: 12.3 years
Indians: average number of years living in Sacramento: 8.3 years
Average number of years living in Sacramento for all men: 10.8 years
One Asian who took part in the S.E.M. Program lived in Sacramento for 5 years or longer.
19% lived here for at least 1 year.
32% lived here for less than one year.

8. Number of months out of the city during the year:

Whites: 5.1 months
Blacks: 3.9 months
Chicanos: 3.6 months
Indians: 4.4 months
Average for all the men: 4.5 months.
One Asian man spent no time out of the city, the other was out 3 months.
35% spent no time out of the city.
18% spent 12 months out of the city.
34% spent 1-6 months out of the city.
13% spent 7-11 months out of the city.

9. Number of months worked this past year:

Whites: 6 months
Blacks: 5.8 months
Chicanos: 5.7 months
Indians: 5.9 months
Asians: 3.5 months
Average for all men: 5.4 months.
4% had not worked at all or less than 1 month.
57% from 1-6 months.
39% from 7-12 months.
It must be pointed out here that even though a man claims to have worked six months, in actuality he may only have worked two or three weeks out of a month, but claims the whole month.

10. Average Income:

Whites: $1250
Blacks: $1100
Chicanos: $1000
Indians: $ 800
Asians: $1600
Average for all men: $1150
The members of the In-Culture Research Team feel these figures are a little inflated for two reasons: 1) nobody likes to tell how much money he made, but if he is forced to, he will usually claim more than he really made just to feel good; 2) this may be how much a man made before the labor contractor made his deductions. The Research Team feels $600 to $1000 is more realistic.

11. Length of last job:

Whites: 1-2 months
Blacks: 1-2 months
Chicanos: 1-2 months
Indians: Less than a month
Asians: 1-2 months
Average for all the men: 1-2 months.
36% of the men claim the length of last job to be less than a month.
30% of the men claim the length of last job to be 1-2 months.
15% of the men claim the length of last job to be 2-3 months.
19% of the men claim the length of last job to be 4 months and longer.

12. Length of time since last worked 40 hours per week:

Whites: 2 months
Blacks: 2 months
Chicanos: 2 months
Indians: 2 months
Asians: 1 1/2 months
Average for all the men: 1.9 months.
39% for at least 1 month.
53% for at least 2 months.
5% for at least 7 months.
3% for at least 1 year.

13. Salary of last job:

18% up to $1.50 per hour.
67% up to $2.00 per hour.
15% more than $2.00 an hour.
It was felt by the Research Team that most men earned between $1.65 to $1.75 per hour.

14. Reason for termination of last employment:

63% claimed seasonal employment.
11% claimed they were laid off.
12% quit.
2% were fired.
4% sickness.
3% weather.
5% temporary.

15. Union membership:

36% claimed they had been in a union at one time.
64% claimed they had never been in a union.

16. Unemployment insurance:

26% claimed to have collected Unemployment Insurance at one time.
74% claimed they had never collected Unemployment Insurance.

17. Time lost from work because of sickness:

80% no time lost.
4% 1-3 weeks.
14% 1-6 months.
2% 6 months or longer.

18. Previous welfare assistance:

74% claimed they had never been welfare.
4% had been on the S.E.M. Program.
21% claimed to have received Regular General Assistance.*
1% claimed some other type of aid.
*Many of these men probably confused the S.E.M. Program of 1968-69 with regular G.A. During that season the men were not housed in a dormitory arrangement; they were given rent vouchers for various downtown hotels and rooming houses which is how regular General Assistance operates.

19. Driver's Licenses:

20% claimed to have a valid driver's license.
80% claimed did not have a driver's license.
Access to a motor vehicle:
7% said they did have access to a car.
93% said they had no such access.

20. Usual occupation:

72% of the men housed at the center this past winter (69-70) claimed farm work as their only skill:
Whites: 65%
Blacks: 64%
Chicanos: 87%
Indians: 86%
Only one of the Asians claimed he was a farm worker.

Following is a list of other jobs claimed by men living at the 2700 Front Street housing center. The first 17 on the list are those most commonly mentioned.

1. General labor
2. Hotel worker (desk man, general flunky)
3. Dishwasher, busboy
4. Equipment operator (generally farm equipment)
5. Truck driver
6. Painter
7. Cook
8. Carpenter
9. Groundskeeper
10. Construction
11. Janitor
12. Roofer
13. Logging
14. Bartender
15. Oil field worker
16. Railroad worker
17. Cannery worker
18. Sheet metal
19. Punch press
20. Meat cutter
21. Mechanic (auto & truck)
22. Service station attendent
23. Pattern maker
24. Brick layer
25. Clothes presser
26. Various production line jobs
27. Parts man
28. Electrician
29. Porter
30. Parking lot attendent
31. Chicken farmer
32. Cab driver
33. Barber
34. Accountant
35. Office worker
36. Salesman
37. Printer
38. Warehouse man
39. Miner
40. Blacksmith
41. Glazer
42. Santa Claus
43. Civil Engineer
44. Refrigeration man
45. TV repairman
46. Furniture mover
47. Private detective
48. Welder
49. Steeple jack
50. Cement finisher
51. Window dresser
52. Fiber glasser
53. Sand blaster
54. Plasterer
55. Photographer
56. Student
57. Plumber's helper
58. Furniture finisher
59. Mattress maker
60. Body and fender man
61. Singer
62. Ambulance driver
63. Merchant Marine (seaman)